

RECALLING A LETTER

HOW YOU MAY GET IT OUT OF THE MAIL AFTER POSTING IT.

The Postal Authorities Have a System by Which a Document May Be Reclaimed if Application Is Made Before It Is Delivered.

A few days ago a young woman hurried into the office of the postmaster at New York and asked to have a letter withdrawn from the mails. She had posted it an hour previously, she said, and since then had learned something about Mr. Blum that incensed her; therefore she did not want to keep the appointment she had consented to in the letter. Could she reclaim the misadvised before it reached the addressee? she inquired.

The postmaster referred her to the superintendent of mails, and within half an hour the letter was picked out from among thousands of its mates and restored to the claimant, who tore it into bits and walked out of the post-office.

The authorities of the postoffice have made every provision for absent and fickle minded patrons of the mails. Among the most interesting and valuable is the process by which a letter may be reclaimed after it has been posted.

Comparatively few people know that this can be done, and fewer care to take the trouble of going through the forms which have been prescribed—forms which are to a degree cumbersome and time consuming, but which, nevertheless, are necessary to prevent deception and fraud.

Occasions arise when the writer of an important letter desires to withdraw it before it reaches its destination. Oftentimes additional knowledge of a proposed transaction is acquired after a letter has been sent to the post-office, making it highly desirable that the facts related in the letter do not reach the person for whom they were originally intended. In case, too, where knowledge of the failure of a mercantile firm or a banking house reaches a person who has mailed a check or draft to that concern it is sometimes wise to withdraw the letter before it is delivered.

The postal authorities have a system by which such a letter may be reclaimed if application is made for it before it is delivered. Application must be made in person. The government provides a blank upon which the applicant writes the address that is given on the letter. If that letter has not left the postoffice, the superintendent of mails finds it and compares the address on the envelope with the address on the applicant's slip. If the addresses are identical, the letter is returned to the claimant and the authorities keep the slip as a receipt.

To reclaim a letter sent out of the office the writer must fill out the prescribed blank and deposit \$1 for telegrams. The superintendent of mails then telegraphs the postoffice to which the letter has been sent and asks him to return it. When it reaches him, he compares the addresses, and if they are alike he returns the letter to the applicant. The expense of telegraphing is deducted from the deposit, and the balance is returned.

This involves a study of handwriting. If there is a noticeable difference in the little things which are characteristic—the manner of crossing the "t's" or the dotting of the "i's" or the peculiar little flourishes which are made after a name—the letter is not delivered to the claimant. In cases where letters are addressed by typewriter it is impossible to identify the applicant in this way.

When the claimant is a well known business man, however, personally known to the postal authorities, letters are sometimes returned upon his mere request, a receipt, however, being asked.

At the New York postoffice, according to the first assistant postmaster, the average number of letters withdrawn each week is ten. Most of these are from the domestic mails. Few are from the city mails, because the letters are collected so frequently and delivered so quickly that there is little chance of "catching" a letter in the office.

Occasionally letters which have been addressed to foreign countries are asked to be returned. In such a case a deposit of \$25 is required to cover the expense of telegraph and cable costs. Letters addressed to points in almost every country on the face of the earth may be reclaimed in this way if application is made before the misadvised is delivered to the addressee.

Great Britain, however, takes the stand that a letter when once dropped in a mail box becomes the property of the addressee, but makes exception in the cases of the Cape and Australian colonies. Why this exception the local postal authorities do not know.—New York Times.

The Gold Pioneers.

Poverty has been the common lot of the gold pioneers. Marshall and Sutter, who found the precious metal in California; Fairweather, the prospector of Alder gulch; Russell and Gregory, the pioneers of Colorado—all died poor. Comstock, who unearthed the Comstock lode, the richest silver vein, committed suicide because of his hard luck.

Not Mere Money.

He (utterly)—Your answer would be different if I were rich enough to shower you with golden eagles.

She—It might be different, possibly, if you should cover me so completely that I couldn't see.—New York Weekly.

If you discover that you have made a mistake, don't stubbornly insist upon keeping it up; let go and run.—Athenaeum Globe.

IMPACTED EAR WAX.

Where It Comes From and How It Should Be Treated.

The normal secretion of the orifice of the ear is the product of glands situated in the outer half of the canal only. This secretion—the cerumen, or ear wax—is slowly poured from the gland ducts as a thin, yellowish liquid. As it quickly loses a large amount of its watery elements by evaporation and becomes admixed with dust it forms a thin layer, waxlike in color and consistency, which normally covers only the outer portion of the canal, that in which the glands are located.

This layer of material probably has its chief function, in common with the few small hairs in the same location, in protecting the vibratory membrane—the drum—from the contact of dust.

It is interesting to observe that the exit of this layer of wax is accomplished by nature chiefly with the aid of the motion communicated to the ear canal by the movement of the jaw in chewing and talking, a motion readily felt by touching the orifice with the finger tip during these processes. The constant increase of the secretion is therefore provided with a corresponding loss, which takes place almost as imperceptibly as the constant loss of the superficial layer of the skin from the surface of the body.

This explanation serves to make clear why the use of ear spoons, pins or hairpins is unnecessary. The use of such objects is not only superfluous, but it is often the cause of the very condition which those who use them would prevent.

Even too vigorous washing with a twisted cloth or sponge, for example, may result in pushing the wax back into the canal until a mass sufficient to block the entire opening is accumulated.

The first intimation of the presence of impacted wax is often the sudden occurrence of a considerable degree of deafness. This is most likely to happen on a damp day or just after or during a bath. A slight amount of moisture causes the mass to swell so that the narrow chink previously existing between the mass and the canal is closed. If it is not now removed, the mass may shrink and the hearing power be temporarily restored, only to be lost again when conditions arise causing an increase in the size of the mass.

Firm, gentle syringing with warm water from a piston ear syringe is usually regarded as the safest and best method of removing the mass, the handling of which had better be entrusted to a physician or trained nurse, if possible.—Youth's Companion.

THE COOKBOOK.

In making any sauce put the flour and butter in together, and your sauce will not be lumpy.

A heavy salad is always out of place in an elaborate dinner. Mayonnaise is permissible, but French dressing is better.

If corned beef is very red, which means it is very salt, put it to cook in cold water. This draws out a portion of the salt.

When croquette mixtures are too wet to mold and shape, put in more chopped meat or fish or in a desperate case finely pounded breadcrumbs.

In making custard for lemon pies it is better to partly bake the crust before adding the mixture so that it may not be absorbed by the paste.

Gingerbread is improved by adding to it, when mixing, a cupful of chopped prunes. Use the juice of the prunes instead of water and mix the dough a little stiffer.

Fried breakfast bacon is much improved if cooked in some of the bacon fat saved from the previous day. There should be just enough for the bacon to float in, and it must be hot before the rashers are added. Cook three minutes.

"Stonewall" Jackson's Baptism.

Robert E. Lee and Thomas Jonathan ("Stonewall") Jackson were once stationed at Fort Hamilton, New York harbor, the former while it was being built. Jackson was baptized at old St. John's church at Fort Hamilton, and the records contain the following entry: "On Sunday, 29th of April, 1849, I baptized Thomas Jonathan Jackson, major in the United States army; sponsors, Colonels Taylor and Dimmick, also of the army." The baptismal font used for this ceremony is still preserved.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

No Excuse.

A member of a volunteer fire brigade did not appear on the scene of the conflagration until after the fire was under control. He was severely taken to account by the chief for this neglecting his duty.

"I could not help it," replied the fireman. "I live a long way from the fire."

"That's no excuse," snapped the chief. "You must move nearer the next fire."—London Answers.

Two Aspects.

Benham—I believe a woman can love two men at the same time.

Mrs. Benham—If she is a married woman, she has to try to.

Benham—What do you mean?

Mrs. Benham—She has to try to love her husband, and he isn't the same man when they have company that he is when they haven't any.—Brooklyn Life.

Pay Your Debts.

"No, sir," declared Gazzan as he warmed up to his subject, "you'll never be happy so long as you are in debt. Pay your debts, Swayback; pay your debts."

"But I have no money," said Swayback.

"Then borrow it."—Detroit Free Press.

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THE FEMININE MIND.

Some Men Think They Fathom It, but They Are Mistaken.

A man can very seldom tell what is passing in a woman's mind. He talks with another man, and he can follow his processes; he gets his point of view; he can read between the lines; he can make a shrewd guess as to how he came to say that or why he refrained from saying the other, says the Watchman.

But a woman's mental processes are not those of a man. Her mental machinery is geared differently. You hear what she tells you. You can make inferences from it. They will be wrong because you do not know how she came to say what she did; you do not have the clew. Try to guess what she will say next, and you will find that you are all at sea.

The man who says that he understands woman is himself a woman. No man can understand a woman. He may love her. There may exist between his soul and hers that indefinable and celestial sympathy which is the sweetest thing on earth, but he does not understand her.

Her mental operation, her ways of thought, her point of view, will always be as inscrutable to him as the mental processes of an angel. Whether women understand each other is not quite certain. A greater part of the delight that men find in the companionship of women arises from their inscrutability. You cannot measure or exhaust them.

Their charming inconsequence, as it seems to you, will never cease to puzzle you, and every fresh conversation reveals a novelty of attitude or opinion.

SHREWD VICTOR HUGO.

The Quiet Way in Which He Bullied the Theatrical Managers.

Here are the methods which Dumas the elder and Victor Hugo employed when they had a new play to offer to the theater. Dumas would write to the director of the Porte St. Martin:

My Dear Friend—I shall bring you on Monday a play in five acts. I shall need Mlle. Georges, Mme. Loyal, Bocage, Lockroy, Provost and five new scenes.

This extravagance would alarm the director, who would put off the production of the play till better days.

Then Victor Hugo would appear and shyly draw a manuscript out of his pocket. He would agree to everything. The stock company would play his piece admirably, since all he wanted was a good ensemble; no new decorations would be needed nor any change at all.

So the piece would be read, and as the roles were distributed Hugo would say musically, "Dieu, how fine Frederick would be in that part!" "That is true," Horel would murmur, and a few days after he would announce that Frederick was engaged. Hugo would then remonstrate that this destroyed the equisite of the cast and Raucourt, Laferrere and Mlle. Georges would be engaged. Then Hugo would attack the stage setting. Old scenes, that the public had tired of, were almost an insult to these great artists. If Horel showed reluctance at this, Hugo would threaten to withdraw his piece. And so the game would go on, till, little by little, Hugo had obtained everything he wanted, even to changing the paper hangings in the stage boxes.

Jim O'Brien's Epitaph.

"I suppose our western country has furnished more funny things in the epitaph line than all the rest of the world," remarked a Colorado congressman.

"I remember one that adorned the cemetery at Leadville in the halcyon days of that great-mining camp. It seems that in the course of a barroom brawl one Jim O'Brien, a well known character, had his existence terminated prematurely. He was a good fellow in the main and not without friends. One of the dead man's associates, in deep grief over his demise, erected a wooden slab over his grave on which he had written in large letters:

"Jim O'Brien departed for heaven at 9:30 P. M."

"A local humorist happened along soon afterward and appended the following:

"Heaven, 4:20 P. M.—O'Brien not yet arrived. Intense excitement. The worst is feared."

—Washington Times.

Love of Country.

For the love of country, as such, it would be difficult to decide between the highlander of Scotland and the mountain born inhabitants of the Tyrol. Both will wander in search of fortune to the ends of the world and yet look back to their native mountains as their only real home. The same is true of the Swiss, although in a lesser degree. It is a very singular fact that inhabitants of mountainous countries possess this feeling of attachment in a much intenser form than those of flat countries.

Lacked Heart.

"Once there was a lawyer out near Galesburg," said an Illinois congressman, "who made a brilliant defense in a certain case. Men praised his effort. 'Will he make his mark for ability as an advocate?' some one asked. 'No,' replied the veteran lawyer. 'His ability begins here at the Adam's apple and extends upward. He must have something under his left breast.' The congressman cited this as an example why some speeches fail in the house of representatives.—Washington Post.

Never Failing.

Sister—What is the best way to retain a man's love?

Brother—Don't return it.—Chicago News.

A woman does not begin to command until she has promised to obey.—Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

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